

## **Data Science Accelerator - Mentor Guide**

### **Why become a mentor?**

Mentors play an important role in the Accelerator; without them, we would not be able to offer the programme. By joining our mentoring team, you will develop your leadership and coaching skills and play a part in increasing data science capability across the public sector. The programme also provides opportunities to network with other mentors.

### **What are the requirements to be a mentor?**

- You must be working in a data science role in your organisation. A HEO level position or higher is expected.
- You should have experience of working on projects that are data driven.
- You should have experience of applied statistics/machine learning to solve business problems.
- You should understand how to apply (and ideally be experienced in) Agile approaches to develop projects. This focuses on having a mindset of iterating quickly, learning from failure and delivering a working output early for feedback.
- You must be able to code proficiently using at least one programming language and still be actively coding. Ideally this should be using open-source options like R and Python.
- Experience in a leadership role (either on technical projects or as a line manager of technical staff) is useful but not essential.
- You must have permission from your line manager to take part in the programme.

### **What is the role of a mentor?**

- Provide one to one support for your mentee on the Data Science Accelerator programme, advising them on suitable ways to approach their project.
- Provide technical advice where necessary and help to remove blockers e.g. access to data, downloading software.
- Be available one day a week (schedule agreed with your mentee) over the course of the programme.
- Your mentee will spend one day per week working on their project. Typically, you will spend around 3 hours per week giving mentoring help. The programme is delivered remotely and you will agree the schedule for your contact points with your mentee.
- You should agree when you'll be able to respond to questions from your mentee, e.g. on non-Accelerator days.
- You are there to provide support and advice, but they need to come up with the ideas and shape the project. Coach them to come up with the right answers themselves, and then support them to deliver.
- When paired with your mentee, you'll both receive a mentoring agreement to sign, which will outline your role and your expectations of each other.